District Plans comprising of schemes to fill critical gaps in physical and social infrastructure in the districts. The District Plan have already been approved. Against the total allocation of Rs. 450 crore (Rs. 45 crore for each district for three years), funds amounting to Rs. 165 crores have so far been released in the last two years.

Data regarding Poverty

3215. SHRIMATI SUKHBUNS KAUR: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether marked disparities have been observed in the data about the extent of poverty prevailing in the country as per statistics provided by the National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO) and the National Account Statistics;

(b) if so, the latest estimates provided by the two organizations about the population living Below Poverty Line in urban and rural India, as at the beginning and middle of the Tenth Five Year Plan and as per Mid-Term Appraisal, State-wise;

(c) the reasons for the discrepancy; and

(d) the special steps adopted and being adopted to achieve the Tenth Plan targets?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI M. V. RAJASEKHARAN): (a) to (c) The Planning Commission, as the nodal agency to estimate the extent of poverty prevailing in the country, does not estimate poverty from National Accounts Statistics data. It estimates poverty only from the data generated by the large sample survey on 'Household Consumer Expenditure' conducted by NSSO at an interval of approximately five years following the recommendations of the Expert Group on 'Estimation of Proportion and Number of Poor' (Lakdawala Committee). To the best of Government's knowledge, no estimates about the extent of poverty prevailing in the country are made only on the basis of the NAS. Therefore, the issue of marked disparities in the data and the extent of poverty as estimated from the National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO) and the National Accounts Statistics (NAS) does not arise.

However, there is divergence in 'private final consumption expenditure' estimated from NSS Survey data and National Accounts Statistics data.

The Total Household Consumption Expenditure estimated from the latest large sample survey conducted in 1999-2000 (NSS 55th Round) was Rs. 707151.9 crore, whereas the Private Final Consumption Expenditure according to National Accounts Statistics during 1999-2000 was Rs. 1271556.00 crore in current prices. The difference between the two estimates of 'private final consumption expenditure' is due to the different methodologies and concepts taken into account by NSS Survey and National Accounts Statistics.

The latest estimates of poverty are available only for 1999-2000, for which data exists from the 55th Round of NSSO Survey on Household Consumer Expenditure. This is given in Statement. [Refer to the Statement appended to Unstarred Question No. 3208 Part (a) and (b)].

(d) The monitorable targets for the Tenth Five Year Plan include quantitative targets for reduction in the incidence of poverty, according to which poverty was projected to be reduced by 5 percentage points by the end of the Tenth Plan period. The Government has adopted a three pronged strategy to reduce poverty. These are (i) acceleration of economic growth with a focus on sectors which are employment intensive; (ii) human and social development through provision of basic minimum services; and (iii) targeted antipoverty programmes.

There are several steps being taken by Ministry of Rural Development and Ministry of Urban Employment and Poverty Alleviation to reduce the number of people living below poverty line in rural and urban areas. For rural areas the programmes are (i) Swarnjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (ii) Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojana (iii) Indira Awaas Yojana and (iv) National Food for Work Programme. For urban areas the programme is Swarna Jayanti Shahari Rojgar Yojana. In addition, the coverage of Antyodaya Anna Yojana has been expanded from 2.0 crore (BPL) families to 2.5 crore (BPL) families. The National Rural Employment Guarantee Bill has also been tabled in Parliament on 21.12.2004.

Rehabilitation in Tsunami hit areas

3216. SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether permanent rehabilitation measures were initiated for housing, education, fisheries and employment in Tsunami hit areas;